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BEFORE THE WESTERN WASHINGTON GROWTH MANAGEMENT HEARINGS BOARD

MICHAEL T. VINATIERI, EDWARD G. SMETHERS, and KAREN KNUTSEN, et al,

No. 03-2-0020c

Petitioners.

COMPLIANCE

ORDER - 2005

LEWIS COUNTY,

v.

Respondent.

THIS Matter comes before the Board for a determination of compliance in response to the Board's finding of non-compliance with the GMA based on the County's "failure to include a public participation process in adopting a master planned location for an industrial land bank in County Ordinance 1179B, Section 2 and LCC 17.20.015." Final Decision and Order, May 6, 2004. The County adopted Ordinance 1179G on May 10, 2004 and Resolutions 04-251 and 04-252 on July 12, 2004. The Petitioners appealed Ordinance 1179G and Resolutions 04-251 and 04-252 in *Roth et al. v. Lewis County and Cardinal FG Company*, WWGMHB Case No. 04-2-0014c. It was originally contemplated that the *Roth* case would be consolidated with this case. However, the two cases address different provisions of the GMA and were not, therefore, consolidated.

The County submitted its compliance report on October 8 2004. Lewis County's Compliance Report, October 8, 2004. Petitioners objected to a finding of compliance. Petitioners' Objections to Finding Compliance, October 5, 2004; Supplement to Petitioners' Objections to Finding Compliance, October 21, 2004. A compliance hearing was held on October 29, 2004 in conjunction with the hearing on the

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merits in the related case of *Roth et al. v. Lewis County and Cardinal FG Company*, WWGMHB Case No. 04-2-0014c.

SYNOPSIS OF DECISION

Lewis County is one of the first counties in the state to utilize RCW 36.70A.365 and 36.70A.367 for the purpose of locating major industrial development outside designated urban growth areas. Although we find that the County's procedures do not yet meet all the requirements of the GMA for such major industrial development, it appears clear that the County is working diligently with these statutes to accomplish the aims for which the Legislature created them. With the addition of opportunities for early and continuous public participation and consultation with the cities located in the county's boundaries to establish a procedure for reviewing the comprehensive plan amendment and development regulations needed to create locations for such major industrial activity, the County will have designed a process that allows it to consider applications to expand opportunities for economic development expeditiously.

In this case, we find that the County has not achieved compliance with RCW 36.70A.140 with respect to the public participation program it has adopted for considering the designation of master planned location(s) within an industrial land bank pursuant to RCW 36.70A.367. This decision is closely related to the decision in *Roth et al. v. Lewis County and Cardinal FG Company*, WWGMHB Case No. 04-2-0014c and incorporates much of the reasoning of the final decision and order of that case. However, it is the intention of the Board to address the compliance of Ordinance 1179G and Resolution 04-251¹ with RCW 36.70A.367 in this case; while the *Roth* case focused on compliance of those enactments with RCW 36.70A.365.

In *Roth*, we found that the public participation procedures failed to comply with the GMA's requirements for "early and continuous" public participation as set forth in RCW 36.70A.140; that

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¹ Petitioners also challenge Resolution 04-252, but it merely adopts rules of procedure before the hearings examiner. Those rules apply to permitting and site plan decisions, rather than to adoption of comprehensive plan amendments and development regulations. These are not subject to the Board's jurisdiction. See *Roth et al. v. Lewis County and Cardinal FG Co.*, 04-2-0014c, Amended Order on Motions, December 21, 2004...

the County had failed to consult with the cities in establishing in procedure for reviewing applications for major industrial developments pursuant to RCW 36.70A.365. (Final Decision and Order, December 9, 2004). The *Roth* decision referenced the challenges to compliance with RCW 36.70A.367 but focused on the challenges to compliance with RCW 36.70A.365 (major industrial developments).

In this case, therefore, the Board addresses the challenges to the public participation procedures applicable to designation of a bank of master planned locations for industrial activity outside urban growth areas, and the claimed failure to consult with the cities in establishing a process for designating a bank of master planned location for major industrial activity outside urban growth areas, pursuant to RCW 36.70A.367. Following the same reasoning applicable to public participation requirements for major industrial developments pursuant to RCW 36.70A.365 as was outlined in the *Roth* decision, we find that the public participation procedures for the comprehensive plan amendment and development regulations required for a major industrial land bank pursuant to RCW 36.70A.367 are also insufficient. We do not reach the challenges to the public participation procedures used to adopt Ordinance 1179G and Resolution 04-251 and 04-252, because we have already directed the County to revisit Ordinance 1179G and Resolution 04-251 on public participation grounds...

We also find that the County failed to consult with the cities as required by RCW 36.70A.367 in establishing its process for designating an industrial land bank. Because of the potential for a manufacturing or industrial business permit application to vest under these non-compliant procedures, we find that the continued validity of Ordinance 1179G and Resolution 04-251, as to RCW 36.70A.367, substantially interfere with the County's fulfillment of Goal 11 (public participation and community coordination) of the GMA. However, the Board's order anticipates a relatively fast County response (ninety days) so that the period of invalidity should be relatively brief.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Ordinance 1179B, Section 2, and Lewis County Code 17.20.015 were found to be out of compliance with the public participation requirements of the GMA by this Board in its Final Decision and Order in this case number, dated May 6, 2004. Conclusion of Law F states:

County Ordinance 1179B, Section 2 and LCC 17.20.015 is not in compliance with the Growth Management Act (Ch. 36.70A RCW) due to failure to include a public participation process in adopting a master planned location for an industrial land bank.

At the time of the original board decision in this case, the County anticipated that it would amend its code to provide that the public participation program for siting major industrial developments outside urban growth areas (RCW 36.70A.365) and for designating a bank of no more than two master planned locations for major industrial activity outside urban growth areas (RCW 36.70A.367) would be the same as the County's existing public participation program for comprehensive plan amendments generally (Ch. 17.15 LCC). However, the County elected not to pursue this course and has instead adopted Ordinance 1179G, explicitly removing proposed amendments to the comprehensive plan pursuant to RCW 36.70A.365 and RCW 36.70A.367 from the County's regular comprehensive plan amendment process.

Petitioners have objected to a finding of compliance in this case and also filed a Petition for Review concerning the same legislative enactments (Ordinance 1179G and Resolutions 04-252 and 04-252). (Roth et al. v. Lewis County and Cardinal FG Company, WWGMHB Case No. 04-2-0014c). The present case (Vinatieri v. Lewis County, WWGMHB Case No. 03-2-0020c), however, deals solely with the compliance of these enactments with RCW 36.70A.367 because the County's public participation program for establishing industrial land banks was the only issue for compliance in the original decision. It was the Board's intention to deal with the compliance of Ordinance 1179G and Resolutions 04-251 with RCW 36.70.A.367 (industrial land banks), including both the new challenges raised in Roth (WWGMHB Case No. 04-2-0014c) and the compliance proceeding challenges raised in Vinatieri (WWGMHB Case No. 03-2-0020c) under this case number.

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In *Roth*, we found that the public participation procedures failed to comply with the GMA's requirements for "early and continuous" public participation as set forth in RCW 36.70A.140; that the County had failed to consult with the cities in establishing in procedure for reviewing applications for major industrial developments pursuant to RCW 36.70A.365. (Final Decision and Order, December 9, 2004). The *Roth* decision referenced the challenges to compliance with RCW 36.70A.367 but focused on the challenges to compliance with RCW 36.70A.365 (major industrial developments).

ISSUES PRESENTED

- I. Challenges to the process established for designating an industrial land bank for major industrial activity outside urban growth areas (RCW 36.70A.367):
 - a. Whether the amendment to Lewis County Code (LCC) 17.20.050 fails to comply with the requirement under RCW 36.70A.367 for consultation with the cities consistent with RCW 36.70A.210 for establishment of a process for reviewing and approving proposals for siting of specific major industrial developments or master planned major industrial locations outside of urban growth areas.
 - b. Whether LCC 17.20.050, as amended by Ordinance 1179G, and Resolutions 04-251 and 04-252 provides for a public participation program for the enactment of a bank of no more than two master planned locations for major industrial activity outside urban growth areas that complies with RCW 36.70A.140.
 - c. Whether the County's public participation program for the enactment of a bank of no more than two master planned locations for major industrial activity outside urban growth areas is consistent with the County's Public Participation Ordinance, Ch. 17.15(12) LCC.
 - d. Whether the County's failure to provide adequate public participation in the adoption of a bank of no more than two master planned locations for major industrial activity outside urban growth areas substantially interfere with Goal 11 of the GMA (RCW 36.70A.020(11)).
- II. Challenges to the procedural compliance with the GMA of the County's enactment of Ordinance 1179G and Resolutions 04-251 and 04-252:
 - a. Did the County fail to provide adequate notice of the consideration of the ordinance and resolutions pursuant to RCW 36.70A.035.

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b. Did the County fail to provide early and continuous opportunities for public participation in the enactment of the ordinance and resolutions as required by RCW 36.70A.140.

DISCUSSION

- I. Challenges to the process established for designating an industrial land bank for major industrial activity outside urban growth areas (RCW 36.70A.367)
 - a. Whether the amendment to Lewis County Code (LCC) 17.20.050 fails to comply with the requirement under RCW 36.70A.367 for consultation with the cities consistent with RCW 36.70A.210 for establishment of a process for reviewing and approving proposals for siting of specific major industrial developments or master planned major industrial locations outside of urban growth areas.

We addressed this issue with respect to the challenge to compliance with RCW 36.70A.365 (major industrial developments) in the Final Decision and Order, *Roth et al. v. Lewis County and Cardinal FG Company*, WWGMHB Case No. 04-2-0014c (December 9, 2004). We incorporate the same reasoning here to find that consultation with the cities is required if a county elects to establish a process for designating a bank of master planned locations for major industrial activity outside urban growth areas pursuant to RCW 36.70A.367. *Ibid* at 4-6. The County failed to consult with the cities and on this basis Ordinance 1179G and Resolution 04-251 and 04-252 fail to comply with RCW 36.70A.367.

Conclusion: The County failed to consult with the cities as required by RCW 36.70A.367 and, as a consequence, Ordinance 1179G and Resolution 04-251 fail to comply with the GMA.

b. Whether LCC 17.20.050, as amended by Ordinance 1179G, and Resolutions 04-251 and 04-252 provides for a public participation program for the enactment of a bank of no more than two master planned locations for major industrial activity outside urban growth areas that complies with RCW 36.70A.020(11), .035, .070, .106, .130 and .140.

Petitioners argue that Ordinance 1179G and Resolutions 04-251 and 04-252 fail to comply with both the GMA and the Board's order on compliance in this case by failing to establish a public participation program that complies with GMA requirements. Petitioners' Objections to Finding

Compliance at 2. The County responds that Ordinance 1179G creates only "procedural rules" which are not subject to the Board's jurisdiction Lewis County's Reply Brief on Compliance and Motion to Add Consolidated Case Exhibits, October 25, 2004.

The County does not dispute that Ordinance 1179G is a "GMA-driven legislative enactment," but seeks to distinguish it on the basis that it is only procedural. Lewis County's Reply Brief on Compliance and Motion to Add Consolidated Case Exhibits, October 25, 2004 at 5-6. However, as we said in *Roth:*

The boards have jurisdiction to hear appeals of comprehensive plans, development regulations, and amendments to them. RCW 36.70A.280 and 36.70A.290. Nothing in the statute distinguishes between procedural and other types of issues presented to the boards. In fact, public participation challenges are one of the most frequent kinds of questions which the boards consider and those would fairly be deemed procedural. *Roth et al. v. Lewis County and Cardinal FG Company*, WWGMHB Case No. 04-2-0014c (Order on Motions to Dismiss, September 10, 2004 – amended on other issues on December 21, 2004)

As a matter of the Board's jurisdiction, the question is not whether the changes in code provisions are procedural in nature but whether they are changes to the comprehensive plan or development regulations. RCW 36.70A.280, 36.70A.290. Ordinance 1179G amends the County's code to establish a process which provides for a comprehensive plan amendment and adoption of development regulations to implement it pursuant to RCW 36.70A.367. It must therefore comport with the public participation requirements of the GMA.

As we found in the *Roth* Final Decision and Order, the public participation provisions of Ordinance 1179G (codified as LCC 17.15.050) do not meet the public participation requirements of RCW 36.70A.140. Final Decision and Order, *Roth et al. v. Lewis County and Cardinal FG Company*, WWGMHB Case No. 04-2-0014c (December 9, 2004). We incorporate the reasoning regarding public participation in that decision here. *Ibid at* 9-13. Fundamentally, RCW 36.70A.140 requires early and continuous public participation and broad dissemination of proposals and alternatives; Ordinance 1179G fails to provide for public participation to meet these requirements and the notice

requirements of RCW 36.70A.035 which apply to opportunities for public participation as to comprehensive plan amendments and development regulations adopted pursuant to RCW 36.70A.367 for industrial land banks. Such changes in the comprehensive plan and development regulations are very significant. The public's right to participate in those changes is very important to public confidence in and acceptance of them. The statute allows comprehensive plan amendments for major industrial locations to be considered at any time (rather than only on the annual comprehensive plan amendment cycle) but it does not suspend the application of the GMA public participation requirements to them...

Conclusion: The public participation program applicable to master planned locations for major industrial activity within an industrial land bank pursuant to RCW 36.70A.367 does not comply with the GMA requirements of RCW 36.70A.140, 36.70A.035, 36.70A.130 and 36.70A.070 and GMA goal 11, RCW 36.70A.020(11).

c. Whether the County's public participation program for the enactment of a bank of no more than two master planned locations for major industrial activity outside urban growth areas is consistent with the County's Public Participation Ordinance, Ch. 17.12 LCC.

Petitioners also challenge the failure of Ordinance 1179G to comply with the County's public participation program for comprehensive plan amendments and development regulations (Ch. 17.12 LCC). Petitioners' Objections to Finding Compliance at 2. The County responds that it amended LCC 17.20.050 to provide that the County's public participation program for adoption of comprehensive plan amendments and development regulations does not apply to applications for industrial land banks. Lewis County's Reply Brief on Compliance and Motion to Add Consolidated Case Exhibits, October 25, 2004 at 8.

The Petitioners challenge the consistency of Ordinance 1179G with the requirements of the County's public participation program in Ch. 17.12 LCC. The County's general public participation program

applies to "long-range planning issues, including changes to the County's comprehensive plan or development regulations, in proceedings not involving a hearing examiner." LCC 17.12.030. The County argues that the amendments in Ordinance 1179G apply to hearing examiner proceedings and are not, therefore, subject to Ch. 17.12 LCC. While it is true that the amendments in Ordinance 1179G pertain to proceedings involving a hearing examiner, they also apply to adoption of the comprehensive plan amendment and development regulations for an industrial land bank under RCW 36.70A.367. The provisions applicable to comprehensive plan amendment(s) and development regulations are not subject to the hearing examiner proceedings. Therefore, the comprehensive plan amendment and development regulations adopted for an industrial land bank pursuant to RCW 36.70A.367 are subject to Ch.17.12 LCC. This creates an inconsistency between Ordinance 1179G and LCC 17.12.030 because LCC 17.12.030 provides that the public participation program in Ch. 17.12 applies to all comprehensive plan amendments and development regulations while Ordinance 1179G purports to exempt comprehensive plan amendments and development regulations needed for industrial land banks from that public participation program. This inconsistency fails to comply with RCW 36.70A.040 and 36.70A.070.

Conclusion: The inconsistency between Ordinance 1179G and LCC 17.12.030 fails to comply with RCW 36.70A.040 and 36.70A.070.

d. Does the County's failure to provide adequate public participation in the adoption of a bank of no more than two master planned locations for major industrial activity outside urban growth areas substantially interfere with Goal 11 of the GMA (RCW 36.70A.020(11)).

Petitioners argue that Ordinance 1179G and Resolution 04-251 violate Goal 11 of the GMA, to "encourage the involvement of citizens in the planning process and ensure coordination between communities and jurisdictions to reconcile conflicts." RCW 36.70A.020(11). Supplement to Petitioners' Objections to Finding Compliance at 5. The Petitioners point to the failure to provide notice to cities and the failure to involve the public at the early stages of consideration of an industrial land bank as substantially interfering with the realization of the public participation goal. *Ibid*.

The County responds that the Petitioners are only arguing for their preference for a public participation program and no more. Lewis County's Reply Brief on Compliance and Motion to Add Consolidated Case Exhibits at 12.

A test for imposition of invalidity adopted by this Board is whether the continued validity of the challenged and non-compliant enactment would interfere with proper planning in the future. In the *Roth* case, we found that the continued validity of Ordinance 1179G and Resolution 04-251 would not substantially interfere with proper planning, in part because the pending application for a major industrial development had already been accepted and approved by the County. Final Decision and Order, *Roth et al. v. Lewis County and Cardinal FG Company*, WWGMHB Case No. 04-2-0014c (December 9, 2004).

The situation with respect to an industrial land bank pursuant to RCW 36.70A.367 is somewhat different. Once a master location within an industrial land bank is approved, approval of specific development permits requires no further comprehensive plan amendment, and manufacturing and industrial businesses may be located in the industrial land bank location. RCW 36.70A.367(5) and (6). There is, therefore, a real potential that permits could vest, even while the procedures are under revision. If they do vest, then a *de facto* industrial land bank will have been created, without meeting the GMA requirements for public participation. For this reason, we find that the continued validity of Ordinance 1179G and Resolution 04-251 substantially interferes with the County's fulfillment of Goal 11 of the GMA.

Conclusion: The County's failure to provide adequate public participation in the adoption of a bank of no more than two master planned locations for major industrial activity outside urban growth areas substantially interferes with Goal 11 of the GMA (RCW 36.70A.020(11)).

III. Challenges to the procedural compliance with the GMA of the County's enactment of Ordinance 1179G and Resolutions 04-251 and 04-252

31 32 Since we have found that Ordinance 1179G and Resolution 04-251 and 04-252 require County action to achieve compliance with the GMA, we do not reach the question of compliance with the GMA in the adoption of these enactments.

FINDINGS OF FACT

- 1. Lewis County is a county located west of the crest of the Cascade Mountains that is required to plan pursuant to RCW 36.70A.040.
- 2. This case is before the Board upon a finding of non-compliance of the County's process for designating an industrial land bank pursuant to RCW 36.70A.367, based on the Board's Final Decision and Order of May 6, 2004. It also addresses the challenges to Ordinance 1179G and Resolution 04-251 raised in *Roth et al. v. Lewis County and Cardinal FG Company*, WWGMHB 04-2-0014c insofar as those challenges also address compliance with RCW 36.70A.367.
- 3. The Petitioners were parties to this case in the original proceedings and filed a Petition for Review concerning Ordinance 1179G and Resolution 04-251 and 04-252 in *Roth et al. v. Lewis County and Cardinal FG Company*, WWGMHB 04-2-0014c. The Petitioners have participated in person or in writing in the legislative adoption proceedings in Lewis County with respect to the issues raised in the Petitions for Review.
- 4. The countywide planning policies in Lewis County encourage economic development "within and without the UGAs."
- 5. The County failed to consult with the cities in Lewis County in establishing a process for reviewing applications for major industrial developments, pursuant to RCW 36.70A.367.
- 6. There must be a public participation program that meets the requirements of RCW 36.70A.140 and 36.70A.035 for the comprehensive plan amendment(s) and development regulations required for approval of an industrial land bank for major industrial development pursuant to RCW 36.70A.367.
- 7. The amendments to LCC 17.20.050 exempt amendments to the comprehensive plan and development regulations associated with the industrial land bank from the County's normal public participation procedures.
- 8. The public participation procedures applicable to industrial land banks under LCC 17.20.050 (as amended) provide for publication of a Notice of Application within 14 days of the date the County determines the application is complete, pursuant to RCW 36.70A.110. Notice of the complete application is followed by a 14-30 day public comment period, which may be combined with the County's SEPA process.
- 9. Thereafter, the County determines whether an environmental impact statement ("EIS") must be prepared and, if so, follows the SEPA procedures for an EIS.

- 10. The proposed master plan is reviewed by the Hearing Examiner and follows the County procedure for a project review. The comprehensive plan amendment(s) and development regulations are reviewed by the Planning Commission.
- 11. While an environmental impact statement may address the requirements for new infrastructure and its funding; traffic impacts; buffers between the new industrial area and adjacent non-urban areas; environmental protection; and mitigation of adverse impacts on natural resource lands and critical areas; as required for approval of a major industrial development, there is nothing in the County's ordinance requiring that it do so.
- 12. The project application elements are addressed to the master site plan, not to the GMA concern of changing the land use designation for the proposed new urban growth area that the major industrial development would require.
- 13. There is nothing in the ordinance advising the public of what steps the County must follow in reviewing and approving the comprehensive plan amendment(s) and development regulations needed for an industrial land bank for major industrial development nor is there any description of how the public may participate along the way.
- 14. The requirement in RCW 36.70A.140 that the County establish a "public participation program that is broadly disseminated" is further evidence of a legislative intent to ensure that the public has full information on how to participate in planning policies and regulations, without requiring a specialized land use expertise to determine how to participate.
- 15. There is nothing in the County's ordinance that mentions the inventory of developable land that the County is required to undertake under RCW 36.70A.367(2)(c) as part of its review and approval of an industrial land bank for major industrial development.
- 16. The amendments also fail to make allowance for the public to be apprised of, participate in, or comment upon the required inventory of developable land.

FINDINGS OF FACT RELATED TO REQUEST FOR INVALIDITY

- 17. Upon designation of a land bank for major industrial development, manufacturing and industrial businesses may be located there without further comprehensive plan amendment.
- 18. This would allow permits for such businesses to vest in the industrial land bank under the existing process even though the process is non-compliant with the GMA's requirements for consultation with the cities and public participation.
- 19. Until the County amends its present LCC 17.20.050, the non-compliant process can still be utilized to designate an industrial land bank to which applications for manufacturing and industrial businesses could vest. This would essentially create a *de facto* industrial land bank whose impacts could not be undone.
- 20. Such a *de facto* industrial land bank outside urban growth areas would substantially interfere with the GMA goals for community coordination and public participation (Goal 11) in a way that would significantly impair the ability of the County to correct its non-compliant process.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

- 1. This Board has jurisdiction over the subject matter and parties to this dispute.
- 2. The Petitioners have standing to challenge the issues raised in the Petitions for Review.
- 3. The County failed to consult with the cities of Lewis County in establishing the process for reviewing and approving applications for major industrial developments and therefore LCC 17.20.050 fails to comply with RCW 36.70A.367.
- 4. The amendments to LCC 17.20.050 fail to provide for early and continuous public participation as required by RCW 36.70A.140 and RCW 36.70A.035 and therefore fail to comply with the GMA.
- 5. As they apply to industrial land banks, Ordinance 1179G and Resolution 04-251 substantially interfere with GMA goal 11 (RCW 36.70A.020(11)) and are invalid.

ORDER

The County shall bring Ordinance 1179G and Resolution 04-251, as they pertain to industrial land banks under RCW 36.70A.367, into compliance with the GMA. To allow coordination with the compliance schedule in *Roth et al. v. Lewis County and Cardinal FG Company*, WWGMHB 04-2-0014c, the County shall achieve compliance within 90 days of the date of this order. The following schedule shall apply:

Compliance due	April 4, 2005.
County's Report of Actions Taken Due	April 14, 2005.
Written Objections to a Finding of	April 25, 2005.
Compliance Due	
County's Response Brief Due	May 5, 2005.
Compliance Hearing (location to be	May 10, 2005.
determined)	

The remand period shall extend until the Board issues its order on compliance hearing.

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Phone: 360-664-8966 Fax: 360-664-8975 This is a final order for purposes of appeal pursuant to RCW 36.70A.300(5) and for reconsideration pursuant to WAC 242-02-832.

Entered this 7th day of January 2005.

WESTERN WASHINGTON GROWTH MANAGEMENT HEARINGS BOARD

Margery Hite	
Presiding Officer	
Holly Gadbaw	
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Board Member	
Gayle Rothrock	
Board Member	